

لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

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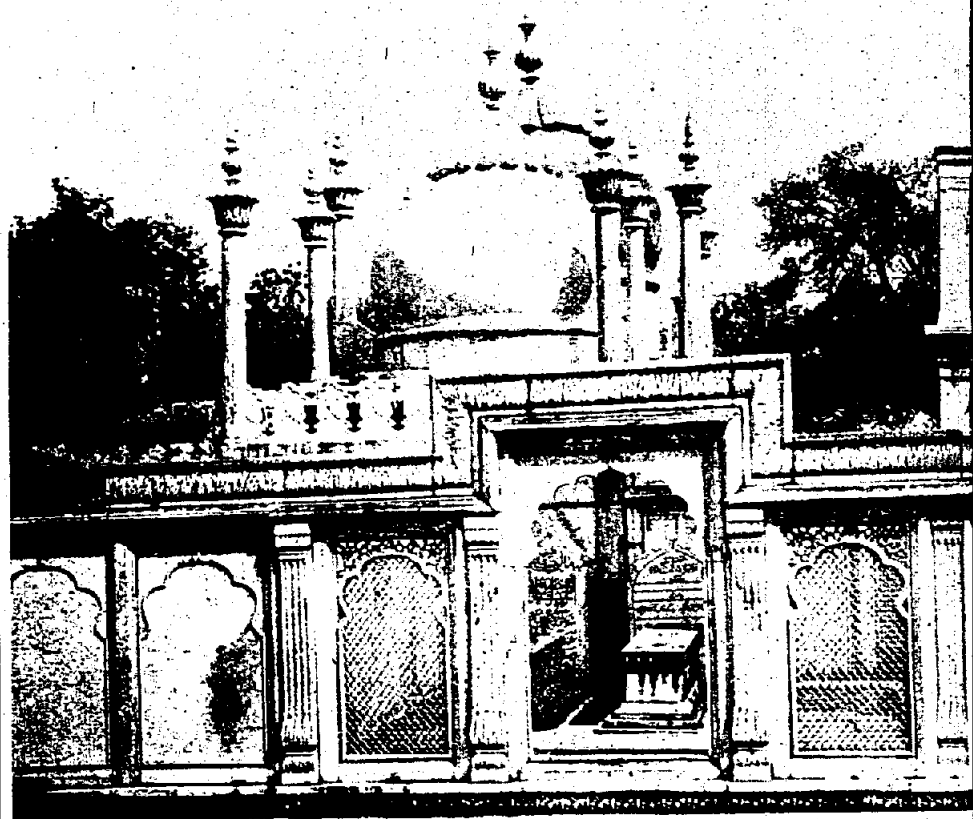
Vol. XIV

Second Quarter, 1942

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Contents

Passage from the Holy Quran.....	3
Sayings of the Master Prophet Muhammad.....	4
Excerpts from the Writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.....	5
The Soul of Islamic Worship!..... <i>By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din Muhammad Ahmad</i>	10
The Best Way to Win War.....	13
Facts and Forces	14
The Right to Property.....	20
The Philosophy of Sin	28
The Life of Muhammad..... <i>Reviewed by Nina A. Stauffer</i>	31



**The Tomb of Akbar Shah,
near Delhi, India**

(Continued from page 3)

the wayfarer, and squanderer not (thy wealth) wastefully.

Verily, the squanderers are brethren of the satans, and the satan is ever ungrateful to his Lord.

But if thou turn away from them, seeking mercy from thy Lord, for which thou hopest, then speak unto them a kind word.

And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck nor open it with an unbounded expansion (ie neither be stingy nor extravagant, but observe the mean between the two extremes) lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded.

And verily, thy Lord enlargeth the provision for whom He pleaseth, and straiteneth (it for whom He pleaseth). Verily, He is ever Knower, Seer of (the conditions of) His servants.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اِذَا الَّذِيْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اِسْلَاحٌ

A Passage from the Holy Quran

Transliteration

Wa quadha Rabbuka alla ta'budoo illa iyyahu wa bil-walidaini ihsana. Innama yablughanna indakal kibara ahadu-huma aw kila-huma fala taqul la-huma uffin wala tanhar-huma wa qul la-huma quawlan kareema.

Wahfidhi lahuma janaha-dh-dhulli minarrahnati wa qur-rabbirham huma kama rabbayanee sagheera.

Rabbukum a'lannu bima fee nufusikum; in takunna saliheena fa innahu kana lil-awwabeena Ghafoora.

Wa ati dhal-qirba haqquahu wal-miskeena wabna-ssabeeli wala tuba-dh-dhir tabdheera.

Innal mubadhdhireena kanu ikhwamush-shayateen. Wa kana-sh-shay-tanu li Rabbihi kafaora.

Wa innama tu'ridhanna an-humu-b-tighaa-a rahmatim-mir-Rabbi-ka tarjuha fa qul la-huma quawlan-maysura.

Wala taj-al yadaka maghlulatan ila unuqi-ka ^{wala} tabsut-ha kullal-basti fa taq-uda malumam-mahsoora.

Inna Rabbaka yabsutu-rrizqua liman yasha-u wa-yaqdir; Innahu kana bi-ibadihi khabeeram-baseera. (XVII:23-30)

Translation

And thy Lord hath ordained, that ye worship none but Him and (that ye show) kindness to parents. If one or both of them attain to old age with thee, say not unto them "Fie", nor chide them, but speak unto them with respectful speech.

And lower unto them the wing of humility (ie be humble to them), with mercy and say: My Lord, have mercy upon them, even as they reared me when I was little.

Your Lord knoweth best that which is in your minds. If ye are righteous, then verily, He is ever Forgiving unto those who turn unto Him.

And give to the near of kin his right, and to the needy and

(Continued on the bottom of page 2)

من احاديث الرسول

The Sayings of the Master Prophet Muhammad

Abu Hurairah reports that one day when the Holy Prophet was sitting with his companions, a man came and asked, "What is Iman (Faith)?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Iman means, one should believe in Allah—the One True God, in His angels, in the final meeting with Him, in His Prophets and in the Life After Death." The man asked again, "What is Islam?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Islam is worshipping Allah without associating anything with Him, performing the five daily prayers, paying over the obligatory Zakat (poor rate) and observing fast during the month of Ramadan." The man inquired a third time, "What is Ihsan (righteousness)?" The Holy Prophet answered: "Thou should worship Allah as though thou seest Him before thy eyes; but, if thou seest Him not, He seeth thee." (Bukhari.)

Abu Hurairah reports that the Holy Prophet related that God said: "I challenge to fight the man who shows enmity to My friends. Nothing is more pleasing to me than the obligatory prayers with which My servants attains My nearness and it is with additional prayers that My Servants make progress in My nearness and become dear to Me until I love them so much that I become their eyes with which they see. I become their hands with which they touch, and I become their feet with which they walk. I grant them what they ask for and I give them refuge when they seek for it." (Bukhari.)

Omar relates that during the time of the Holy Prophet, there came a group of prisoners among whom was a woman who was running restlessly, to and fro; whenever she came across a child she would take hold of it, hug and press it to her bosom and nurse it. The Holy Prophet asked his companions, "Can you imagine that this woman would throw her child into fire?" The companions replied, "No, O Prophet of Allah". The Holy Prophet said: "God is more loving and merciful unto man than this woman is unto her child." (Bukhari)

Sahl Iban Saad reports: A woman came to the Holy Prophet with a garment and said, "O Prophet of Allah, I give you this garment to wear." The Holy Prophet took it and put it on, as he was in need of it. One of the companions of the Holy Prophet saw him with this garment on and asked, "O Prophet of Allah, how beautiful is this garment; will you give it to me to wear? Thereupon the Holy Prophet gave him the garment. When the Holy Prophet was gone, the other companions reproached the man who had asked for the garment, saying: "You have not acted properly in asking for the garment when you were aware that the Holy Prophet needed it and you knew that he never refuses a thing when he is asked for it." The man replied: "I loved to have the garment for my coffin as it had become blessed having been worn by the Holy Prophet." (Bukhari.)

Excerpts From The Writings of

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
The Promised Messiah and Mahdi
(1836-1908)

The Nature and Significance of a Miracle

What is a miracle? It is an extraordinary event the like of which the opponent of a divine messenger is unable to show although the event to all appearance may be within human possibility. An example of it is the miracle of the Word of the Quran which constituted a challenge to all the tribes of Arabia. Although on a cursory glance the subject of the challenge appeared to be within human possibility, yet all the people of that peninsula were unable to produce the like of it. The Word of the Quran clearly illustrates the nature and reality of a miracle, as in appearance it is word like the word of man. But on account of the eloquence, the delicious, clear and colorful diction which everywhere keeps close to truth and wisdom: the clear arguments which overthrew a world of opposing reasons and on account of the magnificent prophecies contained in it, it is such a unique miracle that in spite of thirteen centuries having elapsed, no one possessing a contrary view has been able to challenge it, nor is it in the power of anybody to do so. The Quran transcends in excellence all the other Books of the world in that it sets forth the miraculous prophecies in a miraculous language which is full of an excellence of style or eloquence full of truth and wisdom. In short the object real, important and inherent in a miracle is: To differentiate between truth and falsehood or between a true prophet and an imposter. Such a distinguishing event is called a miracle or a sign. It is so important that without it, it is impossible to profess an adequate belief in the existence of God, neither is it possible to obtain the fruit of complete faith. Evidently truth of a religion is bound up really with a knowledge of the existence of God. One of the primary and essential requirements of a true religion is that it should bear signs which point to the existence of God in a manner absolute and convincing, and that religion should furnish proof of a power that unites its follower's hands with the Hands of the Most High God. We have already

stated that complete comprehension of the Divine Being is not possible by being aware merely of the necessity of the existence of a Creator by looking round the created universe; those who stop at that cannot acquire a true relationship with God, nor can they purge themselves of the selfish in them. If anything can be proved from it, it is only that the immutable and mature order to be found in the universe postulates a Fashioner of it, not that that Fashioner does, in reality, exist. Obviously, feeling the necessity of the existence of God is a mere conjecture which cannot be a substitute for actuality, neither can there follow from it the pure outcome of an actual vision of God. The religion, therefore, which in man's quest after God stops short at the intermediate stage of 'ought to be' cannot be a remedy for man's practical needs. Such a religion is a dead corpse from which it is vain to hope for a righteous change.

It is evident that mere logical proof cannot be reliable evidence of the truth of a religion. It is not such a seal which a clever forger is not capable of forging. It is merely begging at the door of the universal law of cause and effect. Who will decide as to whether what is written in a book has its origin in revelation or is plagiarism pure and simple. Even if, suppose, it was not plagiarised, how can it be absolute proof of the existence of a creator? Can a seeker after truth be satisfied with it as the only proof pointing to God? Nor can one be satisfied that this proof is infallible. A follower of a religion therefore which puts forward premises of logic and philosophy as the proof of its truth but shows no heavenly sign or out-of-ordinary event, is either a deceiver or is himself deceived, and he will die in the darkness of ignorance.

In short, mere logic cannot definitely prove even the existence of God, not to say truth of a religion. Until a religion takes upon it the responsibility of giving an unequivocal proof of the existence of God, it is of no worth whatsoever. And woe to the man who is fond of such a religion! A religion which does not advance man's knowledge of God to a stage where the Divine Being is, as it were, within his sight or where the darkness of soul gives place to a spiritual state, or where the fresh signs of God beget a freshness of faith, and where an unblemished, sinless life is attained, not as a mere pretence but as a reality, has the curse of God branded on its forehead. In order to attain to a state of unalloyed righteousness, a man should be able to gain proof of a living God Who can destroy the transgressors in a moment, and to walk under Whose pleasure

is very heaven. Just as it would not be enough if a religion showed its superiority by logical argument, so an apparently true prophet should not only give proof of observance of the commandments of God, but should also furnish distinctive signs which should bear witness to the truth of his claim. Nearly every man can lay claim to being a lover of God and being innocent of all sins, but how can one be satisfied that this really is the case. If a man is charitable, that may be due to his love of fame. If a man is an austere worshipper, that may be due to hypocrisy. If a man has avoided sins it may be due to his poverty. A man may be righteous possibly out of fear of public scandal and his mind may be devoid of the greatness of God. It is evident, therefore, that a fine character, if anywhere found, cannot serve as a complete proof of real godliness, as it does not rule out the possibility of contrary conduct in secret. The evidence of God Himself Who is the knower of the unseen is, therefore, essential for real righteousness. Had it not been so there would have been confusion between a pure and an impure man and peace would have been impossible. It is extremely important, therefore, to have a distinctive standard. A religion which confers no mantle of distinction on a true votary must certainly be understood to be devoid of light and to be worthless. The Word coming from God has the stamp of such a distinction in it and it also gives to the follower a sign of distinction.

In short, without a distinguishing sign, there can neither be a clear differentiation between a true and a false religion, nor between a true prophet and an imposter, as it is possible that inwardly a man may be a bad character and a breaker of God's commandments but his evil ways may not be known to others. Under such circumstances if he too professes to be a true prophet—for such claims have always been made in the world—what bright sign is there from God for a true prophet by which the latter may be recognized from an imposter, as bright daylight is recognised? From the earliest times and from the time this planet of ours was created God's and nature's law has been that in all things good and bad there has been placed a mark of distinction. You know that gold and brass resemble each other in appearance so much so that an ignorant person is deceived thereby but the Absolute Wise has given gold a distinctive quality which can be easily discerned by dealers in gold. There are many bright stones which very much resemble a diamond and some of the simple minded people

are cheated of thousands of rupees by their agreeing to accept them as diamonds, but the Creator of the Universe has placed distinctive sign in a diamond which can be recognized by an experienced jeweller. Similarly mere trash or things which are valueless may on first glance resemble precious stones and other fine things to be found in the world, but every pure and valuable jewel will show its worth by a distinguishing sign. If it had not been so, there would have been chaos in the world. Look at man himself! Although in outward appearance he resembles many animals, as the monkey, yet, there is something in him which prevents us from calling a monkey a man. In the world of matter, therefore, which is transitory and destructible and the loss of which is nothing compared with the Hereafter, the Wise God has given a distinguishing sign to every delicate and fine thing by which it can be easily recognised. How then can it be supposed that there is no distinguishing sign in the case of religion, where error leads one to hell, or in the case of a true prophet the chosen one of Allah, denial of whose claim results in one's being hurled into the pit of everlasting callousness? Can there be anyone more foolish than he who thinks that God has not set up a distinguishing sign for a true religion and for a true prophet when God himself says in the Quran that Allah's Book which is the basis of religion possesses in itself its distinguishing sign, the like of which no one can produce. He says, moreover, that every believer is vouchsafed a distinction that is a distinguishing sign by which he can be recognized. Be sure that a true religion and a true prophet must needs have a distinguishing sign, which in other words is called a miracle, saintly action, or an extraordinary event.

It is proved from what we have said that a true religion must needs have a miraculous characteristic which other religions do not possess, and a true prophet also must needs have with him some miraculous support from God the like of which cannot be found in others, so that a weak-minded man who stumbles even at little doubts may not be deprived of the golden opportunity of winning divine acceptance. Just ponder and see! When men are so negligent and superstitious that in spite of hundreds of signs shown by the true messengers of God and in spite of the fact that they are succoured by Him in every way, men become victims of doubt from misfortune, and profiting nothing from thousands of signs give way to suspicions, what would have been their condition had there

been no sign from heaven for a God's messenger and all had depended upon exhibition of mere lifeless austerity and observance of outward forms of worship, and, thus there would have been open also the door of suspicions? So the merciful and bountiful God did not like that the world should go to destruction by its denial of a religion approved of or a person chosen by Him. He therefore, sealed the true religion with the seal of permanent signs, and gave the insignia of His acceptance to a true prophet in the shape of his extraordinary deeds. The truth is that God has not omitted any means by which distinguishing signs might be granted to His chosen servants and to His approved religion.

He gave them greater brilliance than that of the sun, and he showed wondrous works in their support, the like of which man's eye had never seen and the ear of man had never heard. In very truth, God no doubt exists, but the mirror in which His face can be seen is the countenance on which He rains His Love, that is to say, the person with whom God holds communion as a friend does with a friend. These are they who have comprehended the reality of unity of Godhood by effacing all trace of duality through the predominance of Love. For unity does not consist in detached belief in the oneness of God; such a unity is believed in even by the Satan. But, with it, it is essential to realise oneness of God in a practical manner by negating one's own existence through an overflow of love. That is the real and complete unity which is the basis of salvation and which is vouchsafed to godly persons. So, it would not be an incongruity to observe that God comes down and enters them, for a vacuum by its very nature tends to get itself filled up. But this is not physical incarnation, it is something which transcends the bounds of 'how and why.' In short, true prophets are endowed with the Divine blessings by a special manifestation of God, and their very life becomes a miracle. They are wholly transformed and their very personality appears in a new form which the physical eye cannot see, but the righteous can perceive its effect. As that manifestation is now experienced by me and the clear signs of the succour of God, which are the deciding factors between me and the world, I call seekers after truth to Almighty God, by setting out the certain signs; which is in accordance with the ways of God, and, thus I bring home to the mischievous bigots the evidences from God. And we cannot do aught except by the grace and power of Allah.

(BARAHINI-AHMADIYYAH)

PART V

The Soul of Islamic Worship

By

Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din

Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifa-tul-mashi II,

Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement In Islam

The first and the chief of the Islamic forms of worship is Salat, which may be called the soul of all Islamic worship. Five times a day a Moslem must present himself before God and worship Him in the mode prescribed. He must first perform the Wuzu (Ablution,) that is to say, wash his hands, face, forearms and feet in the prescribed manner. This is not only conducive towards physical cleanliness and purity, upon which Islam insists, but also has the effect of guarding, as it were all avenues through which disturbance or interruption can enter, viz., the five senses represented by the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hand and feet, the latter two representing the sense of touch. Those who are given to thinking over spiritual matters can easily understand this, but owing to considerations of time and space I cannot here enter into details. The very word Wuzu (Ablution) indicates both these objects for it means both 'cleanliness' and 'beauty'. The performance of Wuzu (Ablution), therefore, promotes physical cleanliness which is indispensable for spiritual purity, and renders the Salat beautiful by preventing and arresting the interruption or disturbance of the worshipper's thoughts, thus making it possible for him to attain the real object of prayer.

Having performed the Wuzu (Ablution) the worshipper stands with his face towards the Kaaba which is meant to remind him of the sacrifices made by Abraham (peace be with him), in the path of God and the good which resulted from them. He then repeats certain prescribed passages, the first part of which is devoted to the praise and adoration of

God, whereby he can perceive, as it were, the reflection of God's image, and his heart is flooded with love and longing and he is especially drawn toward God; in the second he confesses that at every step in the course of his progress he is dependent on the help and assistance of God, and thus perceiving his own helplessness he is impelled toward self-improvement and greater trust in God; and the third contains prayers and supplications, which are the essence of Salat. By prayer man attracts the grace of God, and by the union of the love of man with the love of God the seed is sown of a new spiritual creation in the same way as a new physical being comes into existence by the union of a male and a female.

In short, Salat is so rich in spiritual benefits that man's reason is forced into admiration of it. But in order to be effective it must be performed in the manner and subject to the conditions prescribed by Islam.

The external acts prescribed by the law of Islam for the performance of Salat are not without their significance. During the course of Salat the worshipper must at different stages stand with folded arms, bow down with his hands on his knees, stand erect with his arms hanging by his side, prostrate himself on the ground and sit with folded legs. All movements are symbols of perfect humility and surrender in different countries. In some countries men express complete submission by standing with folded arms, in other countries, by standing with their arms hanging by their sides. In ancient Egypt bowing with one's hands on one's knees was regarded as a symbol of deep respect; in India prostration was in vogue and in Europe falling on one's knees is considered to be a mode of showing reverence. Islam has combined all these symbols in its mode of worship.

Islam enjoins that Salat should ordinarily be performed in congregation, so that the spirit of brotherhood should be fostered. Under this injunction a monarch has to stand side by side with his meanest subject to perform the Salat. The striking spectacle affords a strong proof of the fact that Salat is a reality and not a mere form. All who join in it realize that they are standing in a Presence where a monarch has to lay aside his sceptre and become a mere servant with his subjects.

The principal object of the acts of worship is to acknowledge the favours and bounties of Allah and to render thanks to him for all of them, without doing which man could hardly deserve to be called man, and, secondly, to seek spiritual development. As is said in the Holy Quran:—

"O, Men, worship Me, so that I should favour you with My meeting, and render thanks for My favours and be not ungrateful." (11: 152.) This shows that the object of worship is to render thanks and to seek spiritual development. At another place it is said—

"Salat saves a man from indecency and evil." (XXIX: 45.) The Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and the blessings of God) was once asked why he was so constant in his prayers and he replied—"Should I not be a grateful servant of the Lord?" Again the Holy Quran says concerning Salat—

"Verily, hearts are comforted through prayer." (XIII: 28.) Through Salat one attains to the certainty of knowledge of God which dispels all doubts. Hence Salat is a means of spiritual progress just as there are means for the attainment of different objects in the material world.

In short, the institution of Salat is based on profound truths and combines so many excellences that no other religion can claim the like of them for the acts of worship prescribed by it: It satisfies the objects of worship in every respect and is the only means of attaining righteousness. Those who imagine that they can do without external acts of worship are labouring under a grievous error. Who would be willing to believe that whereas Abraham, in spite of his righteousness, Moses, in spite of his sacrifices, Jesus in spite of his humility and meekness, and Muhammad (on whom be peace and blessing of God) in spite of his perfection and excellence, could not dispense with such acts of worship and were not content with the heart's worship alone, people who are engaged in worldly pursuits from morning till night and have no thought to spare for God, can dispense with them, and can confine themselves to the mere inward remembrance of God? The idea that the external worship is a mere matter of form and is of no real benefit is the outcome of laziness, and is encouraged only to drown the voice of conscience and is a cloak under which people seek to hide their lack of faith.

"They run well, but they have left off the track. The further they run the greater is their error, for they are going ever further off their course."

The Best Way to Win War

Omar, the second successor of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) sent the following order to Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, the commander of Moslem forces in Mesopotamia:—

"I command thee and thy fellow-combatants to fear God under all circumstances, for to fear God is the best of preparations against the enemy and the wisest of stratagems in war. And I bid thee and those that are with thee to guard yourselves against sin more vigilantly than against your enemy for the sins of the army are more dangerous for it than their foe. If it not be so, we have no power against the enemy, for they excell us both in number and equipment. If we are equal to them in sinfulness, they are our superiors in strength. If we do not overcome them by means of our moral excellence, we shall not overcome them by means of our strength. Know that there are guardians set over you by God and they know what you do. So refrain from doing shameless deeds. And seek the aid of God against your own weaknesses, just as you implore His assistance against your enemies. I do the same for myself and for you. Be gentle to the Moslems in matter of journey; compel them not to make such long journeys as may tire them, nor let them make shorter journeys than they can easily perform, until they reach the enemy without being fatigued by their travelling: for they are going to an enemy who stays at home and whose army is intact. Halt for a day and night every week. Let your camp be away from the habitations of those who have made peace with you and have come under your protection and let none of your companions enter them except those of whose piety you are sure.

"And thou shouldst have with thee such of thy own countrymen or of the people of that country of whose sympathy and truthfulness thou art confident, for the information of a liar will be of no use to thee even if he tells the truth in certain matters.

"When thou approachest the land of the enemy, send before thee many scouts, and disperse small parties between thyself and the enemy. Set up guards over the army and be on thy guard against night attacks to the best of thy power. God is thy patron and the patron of those that are with thee and He is thy helper against thy enemy, and He is the One Who alone must be sought for help."

Facts and Forces

A Prophecy Which All Should Know:

"Death will make such havoc that streams of blood will flow. In fact, so great will be the destruction on the earth's surface as the world has not witnessed before. Many places shall be turned upside down and they will present such scenes of horror that one would think they had never been inhabited. Other calamities of a terrible nature from earth as well as heaven will come upon men, so that the wise men will be convinced of their extraordinariness. Then will men in great bewilderment begin to ask themselves what was going to happen. Many shall be saved and many shall be destroyed. The days are near, nay, they are at the door, when the world shall see an unparalleled scene of devastation. Not only will great earthquakes come, but other calamities from heaven and earth will also visit the earth. All this will be brought about because men have forsaken God and with all their heart and all their soul they are bent low on the world. Had I not come, these calamities would also have been put off for a while, but with my appearance the secret designs of the wrath of God have been made manifest, for He says that no 'punishment is sent upon a people until a Messenger is raised.' Those who show fear before the calamity comes shall be shown mercy." (Hazrat Ahmad, The Promised Messiah).

How God Will Solve Color and Race Problem

Asks Equality for Dark Races As Goal of World Democracy

White people and dark-skinned peoples alike are fighting a war for emancipation. Earl B. Dickson, alderman of the 2nd ward and president of the Chicago Urban League, told the Rotary Club of Chicago at a luncheon in the Palmer House today.

"Do you realize that there are more colored people fighting on the side of democracies in this war than there are whites?" he said.

"The colored people who have enjoyed so little democracy, are ready to die to preserve the possibility of its full realization. White people see their own freedom menaced by Hitler and Hirohito. Colored people are better off in this country than they would be under Hitler? So are the whites.

Tells Need for Unity

"To have unity in the war program we must have unity as to the war objective. There are those, like Bilbo and Reynolds in the South and others in the North, who talk about preserving democracy, but mean preserving the status quo. They are interested in preserving a dual democracy for the benefit of the few at the expense of the masses, in preserving the right to discriminate racially, or to conduct their business without any governmental regulation.

"The 14,000,000 nonwhite citizens of the United States have no interest in preserving these things. They are virtually interested in preserving the chance for fulfilment of the doctrine of equal opportunity for all, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, in the Bill of Rights and in the 14th amendment to the Constitution.

"We won the First World War but lost the peace because we did not analyze the meaning of the democracy for which we aimed to make the world safe.

Ask End of Racism.

"We are all fighting against the infiltration of Nazism, a doctrine of the supremacy of one racial stock over the other. Then why not do away with any similar racialism at home?

"The second emancipation proclamation must be written at the next peace table. It must give to all peoples equality of opportunity." —*The Chicago Daily News*.

Editor's NOTE: "*The most righteous among you are the most respectable among you in the sight of God.*" (Al-Quran)

All are the children of Adam and Adam was created of Clay."—(The Prophet Muhammad)

Turkish Neutrality

Turkish neutrality may puzzle some foreign observers, but if one examines Turkish foreign policy since the outbreak of the war, one appreciates the fact that Turkey has followed a policy which remains one of the most clear-sighted of any country in Europe, whether belligerent or nonbelligerent. Undoubtedly Turkey has been favored by fortune and geographic position, but she would not have been able to maintain her present neutrality unless her Government had acted with the foresight it has shown in conducting the affairs of the Turkish

nation during this critical period.

The success of the Turkish foreign policy rests upon two main points:

First, Turkey mobilized her army when war broke out in 1939, and since then the Turkish Government has made great sacrifices to increase the armaments and efficiency of this army. Thus Turkey is the one neutral power in Europe which has a large, highly trained army numbering more than 1,000,000 men and which would be powerful enough to sway the balance at a future moment in a great European battle.

Second, Turkey, despite the intense pressure to which she has been subjected by the belligerent powers has managed to follow a foreign policy which is not unacceptable to all these warring nations.

Recently, the Turkish Foreign Minister, Sukru Saracoglu, summed up the subtlety of Turkish neutrality in an interview which he gave to an Italian paper, *Popolo di Roma*. Discussing reasons for Turkish neutrality, he said, "We are convinced that our neutrality is useful to all the belligerents and that no one will dream of attacking us, because the belligerents already have enough enemies, and not one of them has any interest in challenging our armed strength.

"The Turkish Government has over and over again given proof of the loyalty wherewith it follows its declared policy. Thus when Turkey accepted alliance with Britain, the condition was made that this pact should not be directed against Russia. Similarly, we asked agreement of our British allies before signing the pact of friendship with Germany last year."

A detailed examination of this last phase of Saracoglu's will explain how the present neutrality of Turkey evolved. The tale of Turkish neutrality begins with Saracoglu's visit to Moscow during September, 1939. At this period Turkish policy was clearly defined and its main details had been laid down by Kemal Ataturk.

Suddenly, in 1938, Kemal Ataturk's policy, which has been followed by his successor, President Ismet Inonu, and the Turkish Government, can be summed up as follows: The new Turkish republic needs peace to complete the vast reforms started by Ataturk. But in order to maintain her neutrality and independence, Turkey must have good relations with her powerful neighbors. Ataturk had already established good relations between Turkey and Russia, and foreseeing growing Axis actions in the Mediterranean, he projected a great al-

liance with the two greatest democratic powers in Europe—Britain and France. Atatürk's passing occurred before the Anglo-Franco-Turkish alliance was signed, but he laid the foundations for its signature. Atatürk also saw the dangers of territorial aggrandisements and counseled his Government, including Ismet İnönü, against the folly of attempting to regain lands lost by the Ottoman Empire. His motto was, "Turkey for Turks. Let us be united, free, independent, untroubled by unruly minorities."

When the war broke out, an unforeseen event had happened which upset Atatürk's political program—Soviet Russia had signed a pact with Nazi Germany. Therefore, Foreign Minister Saracoglu undertook a journey to Moscow during September to readjust the now traditional friendly relations between Russia and Turkey. During the Moscow negotiations, Von Ribbentrop, it is understood, did everything to force Moscow to menace the Turks and attempted to trouble the former good relations between Soviet Russia and Turkey. However, Saracoglu, with patience and firmness, eventually persuaded Molotoff and the Russians that friendly relations with Turkey were in the national interest of Soviet Russia, and he left Moscow with a friendly non-aggression pact, which was signed in Moscow in October, 1939. The signing of the pact was a triumph for Turkish diplomacy and a blow to Nazi intrigues. The Nazis received another setback when, on Saracoglu's return to Ankara during the month of October, the great alliance between Britain, France and Turkey was formally signed.

* * *

At this period, it will be remarked, Turkey was acting as a nonbelligerent, and not as a neutral power. The sudden collapse of France during the summer of 1940 faced Turkey with another political crisis; but Turkey loyally stood by her alliance with the Democracies, although the fall of France deprived her of a valuable ally, and left her Syrian frontier undefended. However, the growing power of Germany forced Turkey to take a prudent course, and early in 1941 she became openly insistent on her desire to remain strictly neutral. At the same time, she did not stop arming or lessen her military preparations.

The times became even more critical for Turkey early in the summer of 1941. Hitler had overrun the Balkans and Nazi troops were on Turkey's Thracian frontier. Southwards,

Vichy France was about to hand over Syria to the Axis powers. Russia had not come into the war. Still Turkey, although neutral, did not waver. Indeed, all through April and May, 1941, Turkey was getting ready to defend her territory. Thousands of children were evacuated out of Istanbul, and it looked as if Turkey would be attacked.

Looking back, people may wonder why Hitler did not attack Turkey during the summer of 1941. The answer may be given that the Turkish army was ready, and Hitler's was ready, and Hitler already was planning his Russian push; however, Germany had made sure of Turkey's neutrality before undertaking the Russian campaign. Therefore the much-discussed pact of friendship between Germany and Turkey was proposed to the Turkish Government by Von Papen and was signed during June. Ironically, this pact, made with the consent of Britain, satisfied both parties at the time. Germany was relieved of any fear that Turkey might help Russia, or be used as a base for Allied attack against her southern flank, and Turkey was reassured for the time being that Germany was not going to attack her. Any fears that Turkey might have had as to Soviet designs on Turkish territory were removed by the knowledge that Russia would be fully occupied defending her own vast territories.

* * *

Faced with a tremendous decision, Turkey chose the wisest path and has maintained her neutrality. Moreover, as Turkey controls the Dardanelles, she helped Russia, because the Axis fleet was denied entry to the Black Sea, so the Soviet fleet remained supreme in these waters so vital for Russia.

Today, Turkey's policy of armed neutrality has been amply justified. Her situation is much stronger than it was a year ago. Syria, Iraq, and Iran have been occupied by the Allies, and therefore Turkey's southern and southeastern frontiers are protected. Germany's great striking power has been blunted by her tremendous losses on the Russian front, and now Turkey is receiving American armaments under the lease-lend act, her army is better prepared than it was at the commencement of the war. At the present time, neutral Turkey helps the Allies by barring the route toward the Mideast, and she is determined to remain neutral. Whether the tremendous events to be expected during the coming months will allow her to continue this policy remains to be seen. (By Darek Patmore, *Christian Science Monitor*, April 26, 1942.)

Slavery In Abyssinia

The Emperor of Abyssinia who in the days of his former rule, had issued several edicts against slavery, has now declared its abolition. His reforming way was not easy before and it will not be easy now. Abolishing slavery there means a complete change in the social life of the people. Slavery to begin with, is an integral part of the country's Christian religion. As Lord Lugard remarked, the opposition to the abolition of slavery, "comes principally from the priesthood which considers itself the guardian of the Mosiac law and regards it as an institution decreed by Jehova." If we think of our own difficulties in stamping out the Mui Tsai system in Hongkong, a small place and our crown colony, we shall understand Haile Sellassie's. Wisely his present policy is one of gradualness. A master may retain his slave, if the slave desires it, but every slave may assert his freedom. Lady Simon judged truly in her book "Slavery": "Slavery is so interwoven in the warp and woof of Abyssinian life that the conviction grows that Abyssinia will only be able to free herself from the shackles of this institution by the aid of the generous co-operation of nations who seek not their own advantage but aim at building up the State of Ethiopia."

THE LONDON TIMES.

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The Right To Property

Islam strongly defends the right to private ownership of property, in a way which does not conflict with the interests of the general public. Private ownership fosters competition which is indispensable for progress, so long as this competition can be kept within reasonable bounds and is not detrimental to social well-being. Islamic conception of the private ownership of property, is: "Islam teaches that all things in the universe are the common property of mankind, and that, therefore, there can be no complete individual ownership of anything. A is the owner of his property, not in the sense that anybody else has no rights in it but in the sense that A's share in it is larger than that of anybody else, for he has acquired it with his labor. Islam describes the share of the poor in the wealth of the rich as a right . . ." (The True Islam, page 337).

The Holy Quran says: "*So give to the kinsman, the poor and the wayfarer their rights—i.e., (out of your wealth)*" (Al-Quran XXX-38).

And, "*In the wealth of the rich, the poor who can express their wants and such as cannot express them, i.e., (animals), have a right.*" (Al-Quran LI-19).

Therefore, a Moslem is not permitted to use *so much of his wealth or property on himself as to affect injuriously, the rights of others to it.*

In other words, Islam definitely defends the right to property but provides for a wide and equitable distribution of wealth. Space does not permit us to enter into a detailed discussion of the Islamic economic principles which are constantly operating against the tendency of concentrating wealth into few hands. We will confine ourselves to a brief statement of the following three Islamic principles so that the reader may form some idea of how Islam cures economic ills and creates a healthy social order.

1st.—*Law of Inheritance*: According to the law of Islam no man can bequeath the whole of his property to one person. Under the Islamic law of inheritance, a man's property must be distributed among his parents, all his children male and female, his widow, brothers and sisters, in fact among all of the distant relatives. This law of inheritance brings about three

important results: First: It prevents the accumulation of a man's wealth in the hands of *some* of his relatives. Monopoly of the property of a man by one or two of his favored children or by his widow because an impossibility. Second: Each one of the children and other relatives has his or her share of the capital to start life afresh. None is left to become a beggar in the street. Third: The property of each and every Moslem however rich he may be, continues to be distributed and redistributed, and within two or three generations is parceled out into small holdings.

2nd.—*Zakat*: The institution of Zakat is the second means by which Islam counteracts the tendency toward economic inequality. Zakat consists of two and one-half per cent charge annually, on all capital, commercial investments, securities of different kinds or deposits. This occupies such an important place in Islam that it constitutes one of the five pillars of faith. It is to be noted that this Zakat must be levied on the rich to be restored to the poor. The Holy Prophet says: "God has made Zakat obligatory; it must be levied on the rich and restored to the poor." (*Mishkatul Masabih: Zakat*) Proceeds of this two and one-half per cent charge must go into the public treasury and must be spent on the poor and needy.

Thus, by this institution of Zakat, Islam discharges all those rights which the poor have on the wealth of the rich. On the other hand, it constantly gives wider and wider distribution of wealth and thereby removes the evils of capitalism.

3rd.—*Islam's Ban on Interest*: Interest is one of the worst banes on society. It is a slow individious disease that eats at the structure of a nation and causes its precipitate flight down into disintegration and ultimate ruin. It allows individuals to live and enlarge upon their inherited wealth, without honest toil or productive labor. Such people become parasites on society.

"The possibility of raising loans on interest enables people with established credit to go on borrowing to any extent they please. If such borrowing were not possible they would be compelled either to admit other people as partners with them, or to restrict the scope of their business, so as to leave room for other people to start similar undertakings. The huge trusts and syndicates which at present monopolize the sources of national wealth, would not be possible without interest, and wealth would be more evenly distributed among the people." (*The True Islam* P. 343).

Besides, this institution of interest is often responsible for war. The Great War could not be continued unless governments of the belligerent nations raised money on interest. No nation would be prepared to bear the heavy burden laid down on it by the devastating War.

In conjunction with the foregoing observations the following article, "The Right to Property" will be read with interest.—Editor M. S.

If it can be shown satisfactorily that every individual has a right to property, then it obviously devolves upon the social system to see that each has the opportunity of using that right.

A right means merely a just claim or title to anything, the rational basis for which can be derived from man's nature as an individual or social being.

Every man has a right to provide for his own children. This results not only from the child's complete dependence on its parents and its inability to provide for itself, but also because in the most intimate of senses a man's children are his own. He has a stronger claim to them than has the State.

Likewise, each man has a right to preserve his own bodily health intact, because it is necessary for his complete being. Inhumane social conditions are therefore a violation of this right.

As a final example may be given the right to work. This like the preceding one, is derived from man's right to live. Under normal circumstances a man must work to live, unless he is in the unsatisfactory position of living on charity. Therefore he has a right to work.

Now, it is unjust to take no notice of the rights of another. If it can be shown that every man has a right to property, then any system which does not facilitate the use of such right is unjust. But we will go further than that. We will show that property is essential to man's completeness; and therefore the State, whose duty it is to promote the welfare of its subjects, should definitely encourage men to ownership. Not only should it not permit men to become propertyless against their will, but in circumstances in which they are beginning to acquiesce in such a state of affairs, it should redouble its efforts to preserve them from sinking into such a sub-human condition, because the State is the guardian of the common good.

What, then, is this property, to which we claim man has a right? Property is the ownership of goods, which for the purpose of this analysis can be divided into two kinds—production goods and consumption goods. The latter are all those goods which have reached their final stage of production and are ready for the final act of consumption. Personal accessories, food, household furniture, even houses and motor cars, may be included in this category. Now, no one, not even Karl Marx, questioned the right of man to call his own those commodities which he consumes. It is over the question of the ownership of production goods that controversy arises, and it is to this class of goods that we shall restrict the use of the term property.

Production goods are those goods which enter into the process of production. Therefore, when we say a man has a right to productive property, we mean he has a right to the ownership of the means of production of wealth. Now we must further define what is meant by the production of wealth. Man lives in this world by the transformation of his environment so as to make it more serviceable to his needs. That special, conscious and intelligent transformation of his environment which is peculiar to the peculiar intelligence and creative faculty of man, we call the production of wealth. Without the production of wealth, man cannot exist. Therefore, to control the production of wealth is to control life itself. Because man is a responsible being, he has a right to provide for himself. Therefore, he has a right to property. But to return to the details of the argument:

There are three alternative social orders looked at from the aspect of property. There may, indeed, be a combination of two or all three, but it will probably be found that one will predominate, giving the society in question its decisive character. These three alternatives are:

(1) The concentration of the means of production in the hands of a few. This is characteristic of the Capitalistic system under which we live. In England, it is said, six men own London, one-tenth of the population own nine-tenths of the productive wealth. Here in Australia seventy-nine men control, either directly or indirectly, the greater part of our productive wealth. In the 1933 Census, out of 3,000,000 workers only 500,000 were classed as independent owners (500,000 at the same time were unemployed). But when it is remem-

bered that the great majority of these half-million were farmers depending for their livelihood on banks and other companies controlled by the aforesaid seventy-nine men, it can be seen how far the greater majority of working people under Capitalism belong to what is known as the proletariat (i.e., propertyless wage earners). In W. A., out of a factory population of 24,000, in 1937-38, 1,200 were classed as independent owners. But, again, how many of these could really be called independent—how many were merely managers for more powerful interests? As the years go by, Capitalism, with its trusts, mergers and combines, becomes more and more monopolistic.

"The choice," says Geoffry Crowther, editor of the London *Economist*, "is not between individual competitive enterprise and centralised organisation by the State; it is between centralised control by the State and by private trust."

(2) The second alternative is to say that no man shall own any property; that the earth and the fulness thereof belongs to everybody. That is what has come to be known as Communism.

Nor can one overlook in passing another alternative of Capitalism, viz., Socialism, under which all control of the means of production is transferred out of the hands of a few Capitalists into the hands of a few politicians. In practice, however, Socialism, like Communism, rarely ever appears in a pure form. It either tends to swing to the extreme left and adopt the guise of that form of Collectivist Socialism, known as Bolshevism, or is reduced to the more insipid kind that we know so well, which has been able to fit so beautifully into the Liberal Parliamentary system.

(3) The third alternative is the wider distribution of productive property. This alternative has scarcely ever been seriously noted in social theory, and yet it is probably at the back of every man's mind, as how he would like to solve the social problem for himself at any rate. This silence is hard to explain. Surely it is an obvious alternative to either a few men owning all the property or no man owning any property.

Now, if it can be shown that neither of the first two alternatives are capable of providing a decent social order, then surely the third is worth trying on purely utilitarian grounds. But, furthermore, when it is established that a redistribution of property gives some sort of security, sufficiency, and independence to the worker, then obviously he has what in technical

parlance is called a *moral right of property*, i.e., it is necessary for his material well-being. But, as has already been intimated, the argument will go further and endeavour to show that some control over the means of production is necessary to the nature of man—in other words, that he has an *intellectual right to property*, and therefore not only is a State in which property is widely distributed the most prosperous, but it is also the only natural form of society.

THE DEFECTS OF CAPITALISM

It should scarcely be necessary to point out that Capitalism is breaking down, if it has not already done so, and in any case it has failed to provide a decent standard of living for the majority of those who suffer under it. Only a few of the reasons for its inevitable collapse will be given here, and it should be noted that all these defects are inherent in the system itself, i.e., they cannot be eradicated. Fundamentally, too, Capitalism is based on a false philosophy of life, namely, that the race is to the swift, and that the possession of wealth, once attained, entails only negligible duties. To give only a few of the reasons why Capitalism is unstable:

(1) Because of increasing mass production for mass consumption financed in the mass through the national and international issue of joint stock capital, more and more goods are being produced by fewer and fewer workmen, and, therefore, there is a mad rush for new industries to absorb the new unemployed. Artificial creation of wants by advertising fills the gap to some extent, but gradually saturation point will be approached.

By this I do not mean that a super-efficiency in production will be attained, but rather that production and markets will be continually disorganised, with consequent recurring crises in the body economic.

(2) Because Capitalism is dependent on expanding markets, it needs an expanding population, and yet the population is dwindling. Why? Because in most cases people will not reproduce themselves into the poverty and insecurity of the present age, and also because they are keyed up to an artificial standard of pleasure.

(3) Because it is based on a contradictory exploitation. The aim of the Capitalist is bigger profits through higher prices and lower wages, with the result that the working man

is unable to purchase the product, and depression falls on the system.

(4) Because it promotes class hatred, and no one will stand indefinitely the uncertain hand-to-mouth existence experienced under it.

(5) Because every day it lasts, new tales of intrigue and trickery on the part of the Capitalist lords are brought to the surface.

These are only a few of the reasons why Capitalism cannot provide a decent social system. Lack of space precludes their development and the citing of more. In any case, Capitalism stands condemned by every worker who has to endure it. As Karl Marx pointed out, it began by the expropriation and exploitation of the independent owner, and it is too much to expect the leopard to change its spots.

Defects of Socialism

Besides denying man's fundamental right to property, Socialism has other defects. Notably, it implies a complete dependence on the State, and the growth of an unwieldy bureaucracy. Despite, too, the anti-Fascist crusading of the Socialists it also implies Totalitarianism and loss of liberty. The ideal Socialistic State, where all work together in harmony, is impossible because of the flaws in human nature.

Compulsion must therefore play an ever-increasing part. Note how the Collectivist experiment in Russia has failed, not so much in its plan as in its psychology. As was said before, life under Socialism implies complete dependence on the State. The worker, man and woman, toils until he or she is no longer fit to work. Then he attains the idyllic condition of living on a State pension. Gradually, too, the State will come to interfere more and more in private life and in the family circle. Yet the State was made for man, not man for the State. Finally, the Socialist movement in Australia would probably be accompanied by all the terrors of a Red revolution. The more moderate form of Socialism is drifting further and further along the road towards the establishment of the Servile State, of which more later.

Defects of Communism

The three classical arguments given by Aquinas against universal Communism are:

(1) There is no adequate incentive for work when all goods and all labor products are held in common.

(2) Under such conditions, chaos and confusion would necessarily arise.

(3) Such confusion and struggling for goods on the part of everyone would lead not to universal peace but to bitter strife.

In reality, therefore, it can only function on authoritarian lines, and must appear as some form of Socialism.

Finally, the establishment of Communism involves hosts of practical difficulties. For example, what would be the position of a poverty-stricken State beside a wealthier neighbor? It is obvious that Collectivist Russia will never be able to obtain the pure Communist ideal.

By H. G. in THE RECORD (Australia)

*O Lord of my delight
Lead Thou me in the light.
For every day Thou art my sun
Until my sojourn here is done.*

*My eyes Thou art to me
To make me clearly see
How great is all Thy love to me
And all the other souls that be.*

*Be Thou my hearing too
That I may hear what's true
And on Thy words so meditate
That they may my life consecrate.*

*Hands unto me Thou art
Tongue, feet and e'en a heart
By Thee I walk and talk and feel
For on me is Thy holy seal.*

*Bless'd One, I Thee adore,
And love Thee more and more
O make me mirror forth Thyself
Till free from dross I've purged myself.*

The Philosophy of Sin

"What is Sin"

Malik Ataur Rahman

The root of sin lies in the wrong use of things our Creator, the Almighty God, has vouchsafed to us human beings for our physical, intellectual and spiritual benefit. In other words we can say that sin is a poison which is created in the mind when a man violates the heavenly laws pertaining to God's commandments and injunctions. In consequence, it proves detrimental, often fatal, to that love of God which is the primary aim of the scheme of life to nurture and develop in man.

The Remedy

It is a common law of nature that when there occurs a deficiency it can only be made up by an adequate supply of the missing thing; *e.g.*, when a man feels hungry or thirsty, these feelings can be appeased only by a supply of the articles of nourishment the lack of which in his system had given rise to them. Similarly when a mechanical plant fails to work on account of a breakage of some of its parts, the only way to make it resume operation is to replace the broken part with a new one that would work smoothly or to repair the damaged portion. Sin is due to a deficiency in our love of God from which springs our obedience to Him, and the taint of sin cannot be removed from the heart unless the sinner feels contrite and completely penitent. Sincere and earnest repentance turns man to his Creator; and once again from that repentance his love of God receives a fresh charge which gives him the strength to avoid similar pitfalls in future.

Thus we can divide the treatment of sin in three different parts: (1) Love of God, (2) beseeching forgiveness, and (3) penitence.

1. Love of God

When the heart of man is devoid of the love of God sin takes root in it. So in order to safeguard himself against sin it is necessary that man should establish a strong relation with his Master and Creator. The Holy Quran, says:

"Those who believe are stauncher in their love for Allah than in their love for anything else." (11-165)

2. Beseeching Forgiveness

Again, sin involves an infringement of the law. So it is necessary that one should beg pardon of God and repent the blunder he has made, because, unless the sinner begins to feel ashamed of his conduct, he can not redeem his soul from the blackness of that sin. The Holy Quran says:

And those who when they commit an indecency or do injustice to their souls remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their faults—and who forgives the faults but Allah?—and do not knowingly persist in what they have done.

For these, their reward is forgiveness from their Lord and gardens beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them, and excellent is the reward of workers of good deeds. (III-133, 134)

3. Penitence

The perfection of penitence can be achieved only with the help of perfect deeds. After the penitent mood has set in, our subsequent good deeds serve to strengthen it and make it perfect. And because penitence is necessary for the cleansing of sin, the more one does good deeds the better it is for him. The Holy Quran conveys the very sense thus:—*Virtuous deeds remove and destroy the evil.*

To sum up, just as the love of God is necessary if we are to avoid sin, similarly is penitence necessary to wash off its stains from the soul. As the most perfect spiritual man the world has ever witnessed (may peace and blessing of God be upon him) declared i.e., *He who repents from sin is like one who have never sinned.*

Again the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of God be upon him) says: Islam destroys the sins that had gone before it. One who earnestly enters the fold of Islam, knowing and confessing that previously he had been off the right path, and repents to the utmost of his past mistakes, he remains no more liable to be called to account for his previous misdeeds. He had been like one in a dark pit, unable to discriminate between good and evil; and if he did wrong, it was all due to the darkness which did not allow him to see things clearly. In Islam, thus, the future for a convert is always full of hope, and this hope does not rest on the blood of an innocent man, and on the injustice of God in allowing that blood to be shed: it rests, as indeed it should, on the inner conversion in the man himself and on the new light in which he now

sees things clearly. God says in the Holy Quran *We created man in the best of moulds*. In other words sin is not inherent in man. His rise, therefore, to any eminence in the spiritual sphere is limited only by limits set by the quality of his own exertions. The field of progress open to him is endless.

That the above view is no vain dream is proved by the history of Arabia under the inspiration of Islam.

Is there any evil on the face of this earth that was not in practice in Arabia at the advent of Islam. Debauchery and impiety prevailed throughout its length and breadth. Dissolute wars, disorder and chaos, political as well as moral, held sway all over the peninsula. But in spite of this the inhabitants of the desert land, who had sunk to the very lowest depth of degradation, showed an amazing change after embracing Islam. Those who were a disgrace to humanity, under the impetus of Islam they shaped themselves into the highest embodiments of human virtue. They laid the foundation of a culture that in its simplicity and sublimity stands unrivalled even today. The example of the great Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) raised them out of disgrace and misfortune in so short a time that the rest of the world was simply wonder struck. Even Christian historians have been forced by facts to express warm appreciation of this marvelous and rapid transformation. Muhammad changed these savage beasts into human beings and then into God-fearing, righteous and saintly men—and herein lies the greatest miracle ever performed by a Prophet of God.

Penitence and atonement for sin can never be vicarious, and it is not commonsense to say that any spiritual progress is possible on this wrong foundation. On the other hand when a man embraces Islam he is told that the evils he had done in the past have fallen away from him, burnt off during the purifying process of conversion, and that he is not to be called to account for these; but in future he would stand or fall through his own actions. He is given a fresh start with a clean slate and a new hope. The Holy Quran tells him:

"And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for:

"And that his effort will be soon seen:

"Then shall he be rewarded for it with fullest reward"

LII—39, 40, 41.

This is the view that Islam inculcates, and no view could be more reasonable than this.

Review Of Religion

The Life of Muhammad

Reviewed by Nina A. Stauffer

Muhammad, the Founder of Islam, has long been recognized as one of the few men who helped to shape the history of the world. It is a peculiar fact that so little has been known about this great character for so many centuries. The stories which have grown up about him in the western world are apparently as mythical as some of the extant stories of the Ancient Gods of mythology. At last we have a book published in English which seeks to show the true life and character of the man who has been so grossly misrepresented.

The "Life Of Muhammad" by M. R. Bengalee, is a most interesting book because it gives the reader a new picture of Islam and its Founder. The factual material which the author has used shows that he has done a tremendous amount of research work, not only in the archives of ancient Arabian history, but also, in the history of religions.

Sufi Bengalee has opened his story with a colorful description of Arabia, where the Holy Founder of Islam was born. He sets forth the condition of the country before the advent of the Holy Prophet and the recreation of a people who had been steeped in the iniquities of ribald living. He traces carefully the lineage of Muhammad to Abraham, the father of prophets, thus showing how the three great religions namely, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, are united.

There is some enlightening information about the birth of the Holy Prophet and some pointed facts and incidents regarding his family. This man who was destined to change the history of the world is described as a man of impeccable character, religious and devout, who served his friends and relatives well, and then found time for prayer and communion with God. The author states that it was while Muhammad was engaged in prayer that God spoke to Muhammad and revealed unto him the words of the Holy Quran, the text of which the Holy Prophet dictated to his followers who memorized and wrote it for future use.

The greater part of the book deals directly with the rise of Islam and Muhammad's struggles to propagate the Faith. There is a lengthy chapter on the Meccan Life of the Holy Prophet which lays the foundation for the growth of Islam. The reader is forced to realize that he is meeting a new Muhammad, a man who has heretofore been unknown to the western world. This prophet is described as a man who seeks to solve his problems and those of his people by retreating from the world to a place of prayer. He comes to his people with a prayer on his lips. He forgives them their deeds of unkindness to him, and he enjoins upon them to give up their sinful habits of living in the name of Allah. The Holy Prophet's flight, the Hizrah from Mecca to Medina is meticulously described for this event marked the beginning of the present Mohammedan calendar.

This chapter is followed by a still lengthier one which portrays the Holy Prophet's life in Medina. These two chapters give a brief resume of the significant part of Muhammad's life and works. The writer outlines very minutely important battles which circumstances forced the Founder of Islam to wage and the manner in which he acquitted himself. He also proves that Muhammad did not seek war, that he resorted to the sword only as a means of self-defense. Sufi Bengalee depicts fervently how the people, one by one, forsook their old religion and customs to follow their distinguished leader.

The author is very zealous in the presentation of his subject matter for he has cited many incidents which he has gleaned from various Arabian sources which disprove the distorted theories that Muhammad was a pleasure-loving ascetic. The man we meet on these pages is a person of stern reality—he has a mission to perform for his people and he executes the same with a purposeful determination, never losing the nobility of his character by an unworthy action. The hardships which he endured and the persecutions to which he was subjected are treated with great reverence and humility.

The chapter dealing with "The Teachings of Muhammad" should be read for academic purposes if for no other reason, for the writer has clarified many of the erroneous beliefs regarding Islam, namely, its attitude toward other religions, Tolerance, Heaven and Hell, the Liberation of Women, the Principles of Economic Justice, Muhammad's influence on science and education, the transformation wrought in Arabia by Muhammad, and lastly his universal service to Mankind.

There is a spiritual undercurrent throughout the narrative. The entire book sparkles with prayers and noble thoughts. The sixth chapter on the Sayings of Muhammad, which consists of gems of wisdom, is a distinctive feature of the book. The author has also cited a number of passages of scripture in the Bible where the advent of Muhammad is prophesied.

There are copious foot-notes and a complete bibliography given for the benefit of scholars who wish to acquire a greater knowledge of this subject. The Arabian bibliography would also be very helpful to all historical students, for Sufi Bengalee has obtained the greater part of his material from reliable Arabian sources. The story is very easy for the average layman to follow for the narrative is told in clear, concise, straightforward English which will delight any reader. The action moves rapidly through the first three chapters, becoming more descriptive in the subsequent ones.

This book is a timely revelation of the lives and beliefs of the millions of Moslems with whom the Western world is coming in closer contact, in the present conflict. Never in the history of the world was there a more crying need for better mutual understanding of the peoples of the earth than now, so it behoves us all to read Sufi Bengalee's book in order that we may become better acquainted with the followers of Islam.

What is Islam?

Islam is the religion which is wrongly called Mohammedanism.

1. Islam means:

- (1) Peace
- (2) Resignation

The significance of the name Islam is the attainment of a life of perfect peace, and eternal happiness through complete resignation to the Will of God.

2. Absolutely uncompromising monotheism is the central teaching of Islam. "La-Ilaha, Illallah Muhammadur-Rasululla." "There is none worthy of worship but one and the only God (Allah), Who possesses all excellences, and Muhammad is His prophet." This is the most important doctrine of Islam. Furthermore, Islam helps us to establish a permanent relationship with God and to realize Him during our earthly life as our Helper in all our affairs and undertakings.

3. Islam requires belief in all the prophets and spiritual guides including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Budha and Confucius. Islam represents the completion of the mission of all the prophets from the earliest dawn of history: that in fact all the prophets of God came with one and the same mission. Thus Islam establishes peace between all religions.

4. The Quran, the Moslem Scripture—the word of God was revealed to the Master-prophet Muhammad over thirteen hundred years ago and has been preserved intact without the slightest change. There are millions and millions of Moslems who know the whole Book by heart. It is an inexhaustible mine of spiritual truths which satisfy the needs of all peoples of all countries.

5. The establishment of true democracy and universal brotherhood without any discrimination of caste, creed, colour or country is the unique and unrivalled distinction of Islam. Islam has not only propounded but fulfilled and realized the splendid principles of democracy in the actual life and action of human society.

6. Following are a few of the specific peculiarities of Islam:

- (a) Liberation of women by establishing the equality of both sexes, safe-guarding their rights and liberties and raising their status.
- (b) Absolute veto on all intoxicants.
- (c) Solution of economic problems.
- (d) The furnishing of humanity with the noblest practical ethics.
- (e) The promotion of science and education.

7. Following are some of the obligatory duties of Islam:

- (a) Daily prayers.
- (b) Fasting in the month of Ramadan.
- (c) Fixed almsgiving and charity.
- (d) Pilgrimage once in one's lifetime, provided circumstances allow.

8. According to Islam life after death is the continuation of life on earth. Heaven and Hell begin right from here. Heaven is eternal and everlasting, while Hell is only temporary. Hell is as a hospital treatment for the human soul which, as soon as it is cured, goes to Heaven. Heaven is the attainment of a life of everlasting progress and complete joy and happiness through union with God and by the development of the fine spiritual qualities and the unlimited capacities that have been implanted in man.

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